MEMOIRS

OF THE PRESENT

COUNTESS OF DERBY.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.]

MEMOIRS

OF THE PRESENT

COUNTESS OF DERBY,

(LATE MISS FARREN);

INCLUDING

ANECDOTES OF SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,

PARTICULARLY

THE RIGHT HON. C. J. F—,
R. B. S——N, ESQ.
THE EARL OF D——Y,
LORD ST—NL—Y,
THE LATE GENERAL BURGOYNE,
LORD M——T—WN,
THE LATE MR. PARSONS,
THE DUKE OF R——M—D,
MR. KING, THE ACTOR,
MR. FARREN, HER LADYSHIP'S FATHER,
MRS. FARREN, HER LADYSHIP'S MOTHER,
MRS. KNIGHT, HER LADYSHIP'S SISTER,
GEORGE COLMAN, THE ELDER,
THE LATE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD,
MR. J. PALMER, THE ACTOR,
THE LATE MR. YOUNGER, &c. &c.

BY PETRONIUS ARBITER, ESQ.

——RIDENTEM DICERE VERUM
QUID VETAT?

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MEMOIRS

OF

ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF DERBY.

SINCE the days of the notorious POLLY FENTON*, Miss FARREN is the first of the Children of Thespis who has arrived at the dignity of a Peerage;—the first who, after emerging from poverty and obscurity, and arriving at the summit of her profession as an Actress, has had the good fortune to be transferred from the mimic grandeur of the Stage to the real splendors of a Court. A narration, therefore, of the circumstances of her birth, and the early events of her life, must prove entertaining to all who take pleasure in contemplating the progress of celebrated characters; and the more so, as so many contradictory accounts have been given of her life. Some of her Biographers have stated her to be allied to Families of the first respectability in Ireland; while others have insisted that she was indebted to the benevolent laws of this Coun-

* This Lady was the original *Polly Peachum*, in GAY's *Beggar's Opera*; and her charms in that character (more particularly in the scene in which she supplicates her Father to spare the life of *Macheath*—"O, ponder well, be not severe," &c.) so won upon the affection of the then Duke of BOLTON, that he raised her to the participation of his bed and fortune, by making her his wife.

try for the protection afforded to her infant years; and that the first exertions of her industry were employed in trundling a mop as house-maid to a tradesman in Bath. Both of these relations are very far from the truth. From her Ancestors Miss FARREN, in our opinion (to use the language of the Historian of the Roman Empire) "derives neither glory or shame;" though, perhaps, the fastidious pride of the Countess may blush for the meanness of the origin of the Player. Her Father began his career in life by hammering drugs in a mortar for an Apothecary in the County of Cork; but indignant that his genius should be so cramped, and thinking it more honourable to "tear a passion to tatters, to very rags," than to pound rhubarb and nitre, he embraced an early opportunity of joining an itinerant Company of Performers who passed through the town he lived in; and shortly became an established member of their corps. In this situation he continued for many years, travelling from place to place, and undergoing all the vicissitudes incident to that mode of life. Tired at length with the wretchedness of the condition* of a Strolling Player in the country parts of the Sister King-

* The wretchedness of an Itinerant Corps in Ireland, can hardly be conceived from what we see in this Country. The Author of these Memoirs has seen the part of the *Widow Brady* (a breeches part), in the Farce of the *Irish Widow*, played in high-heeled shoes, a shift, and a loose great coat, the poverty of the wardrobe not affording better accommodation. He remembers also to have seen the part of *Captain Plume*, in the *Recruiting Officer*, enacted in a *red stuff coat*, and a *laced waistcoat* and *yellow plush breeches* borrowed from the Footman of the Parish Rector. And being once behind the scenes of a Theatre erected in a barn, and observing a Gentleman decked in a very gaudy suit without any stockings, he inquired whether the part he was going to perform required his legs to be naked? and was informed that the Gentleman's Wife was then on, using the stockings, and that as he did not appear at the same time with her, (he only appearing once in the course of the Play), he was waiting till she took them off, in order to his putting them on. Fifty facts, equally whimsical, might be related.

dom,

dom, and thinking his abilities deserved a better reward than *starving*, he determined to adventure his fortune in England; and for that purpose, with much difficulty, he found his way to Liverpool, where, after some solicitation, the Manager engaged him to play second and third-rate characters.

An engagement in a regular Company, with a fixed salary, however small it might be, was a new life to Mr. FARREN; and his sense of his happiness was so great, that it shewed itself in his copious libations at the shrine of Bacchus; or, in plainer language, he was so often intoxicated, that the Manager had several times, in the course of the season, an intention of discharging him. Frequently has the Play been impeded from poor FARREN's forgetting it was time for him to be at the Theatre, and indulging in another cup. He, for the most part, however, contrived to walk on soberly in the first act, though he generally staggered off drunk in the fifth*.

Mr. FARREN's favourite liquor, when he resided at Liverpool, was *Ale*; and at that time, a little pot-house in Water-lane, in that town, was celebrated for selling the best in Liverpool. To this house, therefore, he resorted every day to take his cup, and enjoy the fumes of a pipe of the best Virginia. The landlord had an only daughter, a pretty, fresh-faced, smirking wench, who was mad for the company of Players, and would listen, with the greatest delight, to any tales relative to the

* An Anecdote of poor FARREN's intoxication on the Stage, is still told in Liverpool. Having occasion in one of his parts to tear a letter, he was so tipsy, that after exclaiming seven or eight times, "and thus I tear the letter," and making seven or eight attempts, in each of which his hand missed it, he altered the text of the author to, "and thus I throw the letter from me;" threw it down, and the Play proceeded.

Stage

Stage or its professors. No wonder, then, that she always took care to hand the *Actor-man*, as she called him, his cup of the mild beverage. The assiduities of his charming Hebe at length had some effect on the heart of the Son of Thespis, and after an interchange of ogles and smiles, he began to drink delicious poison from her eyes, while he swallowed down the contents of the brown cup he had received from her fair hand. A sincere affection soon took place between them, mutual vows of eternal love succeeded, and after a few months spent as Lovers, they became Man and Wife. This event took place some time about the year 1758.

In her marriage with Mr. FARREN, Mrs. FARREN had not only been actuated by the affection she bore him, and the pride of appearing the wife of an Actor in preference to *serving out Ale*, but by an ambition to become an Actress herself. In this ambition she was shortly gratified, by making her first appearance (we believe in a very humble part in Comedy) on some Theatre in Lancashire, to which she had accompanied her husband; but her success was very far from flattering, and she was not enabled, by the produce of her acting, to add much to the comforts of matrimony.

In this itinerant life Mr. and Mrs. FARREN continued during the first four or five years after their marriage, with various success, in different parts of England and Ireland. Mrs. FARREN, though not very fortunate as an Actress, was very prolific as a Mother, and in less than four years, produced her husband three fine Girls and a Boy:—Miss KITTY, now Mrs. KNIGHT; Miss BETSEY, the subject of these Memoirs; and two others who died young. By careful œconomy on her part, notwithstanding Mr. FARREN's fondness for Ale, she was enabled to provide for the infancy of these children with decency; and as long

as

as their Father lived (to her honour be it spoken), her care and prudence preserved the whole family from want. His death, however, about ten or twelve years, as we are informed, after their marriage, reduced Mrs. FARREN and her Children to the greatest distress.

Left without friends, and even without abilities to procure a comfortable subsistence for a numerous family, Mrs. FARREN struggled for them with great fortitude; and though she experienced the most poignant poverty, yet she fulfilled the duties of a Mother with the greatest tenderness. As her situation in the Corps to which she belonged, was very inferior, so were her profits; and whenever her Children were capable, she put them on the Stage, that their exertions might contribute a small pittance to the general stock. Her eldest Daughter, KITTY (now Mrs. KNIGHT) first cheered her hopes, by displaying great vivacity and sprightliness in the parts of Girls and Chambermaids; while BETSEY (the Countess of DERBY) received great applause in *Edward the Fifth*, in the tragedy of *Richard the Third*, and similar parts; at the same time she discovered a very agreeable voice; but their indigence was still exceedingly depressing.

The generality of the Companies of Players out of London are what are called Sharing Companies*—every Performer partaking equally of

* It may not be unentertaining to give our readers a short sketch of the nature of these Sharing Companies.—There are generally in each of them, including the Manager, sixteen persons. The profits are divided into twenty shares, of which the Manager, for Scenery, Wardrobe, &c. takes four, and one as a Performer; of the remaining fifteen shares, each member takes one; and it is to be observed, that every Actor takes an equal share, whether he performs first, second, or third-rate parts. Thus *Macbeth* and the *Murderer*, *Hamlet* and the *Sentinel*, *Lear* and one of his *Knights*, all take an equal division of the spoil.

the profits. To these Companies it was generally the lot of Mrs. FARREN to belong; and as every one shared the profits, every one partook of the labours. The scenery and wardrobe of a Company of this kind, cannot be supposed to be very ponderous articles; if, therefore, at any time, the funds of the Company were so low as not to furnish the necessary sum for the hire of any kind of vehicle, to convey the live and dead stock from town to town, each member took a portion of the scenery or wardrobe on his back, and trudged on to where they next intended to establish themselves;—nor were the Ladies excused on such occasions. Whenever this circumstance occurred in a Company to which Mrs. FARREN for many years belonged, it always fell to the lot of Lady DERBY to carry the *Drum!*

This carrying the *Drum* may, to such as are not acquainted with the paraphernalia of a Country Company, be unintelligible. We therefore explain it.—As the finances of the Company are always slender, and the strictest œconomy is necessary, a very small number of Bills are made to answer the purpose of announcing the intended Representations. But to make amends for this defect, which prudence compels them to, they distribute their Bills by beat of *Drum*, in order that their arrival and intentions may be known to every inhabitant. A *Drum*, on this account, always makes a part of the property of a Country Company; and her Ladyship, from being so very young, and being a favourite with the Manager, had always the care of it entrusted to her, and carried it on her head in their wanderings from place to place*.

* Some Companies which wish to appear very respectable, add at the bottom of their printed Bills—"N. B. The Company do not use a *Drum!*"

In

In the course of one of these wanderings, when the Company were moving from one town to another, they were overtaken b a very heavy shower, and BETSEY FARREN (her Ladyship) fearing her *Drum* might not sufficiently shelter her from the pelting of the storm, called out to one of the male members of the Company, who was carrying a part of the scenery, " Here, Mr. ——, give me the fat Alderman, he shall *cover* me." By this fat Alderman, her Ladyship meant the picture of the Alderman used in CUMBERLAND's charming Comedy of the *West Indian*, which was at that time very popular.

In this way passed the early part of the life of her Ladyship. We now conduct her to a period of her existence, from which she may fairly date all her subsequent fame.

Tired with the misery attendant on a strolling life, and unable from the profits it produced to provide even the necessaries of life for her Children, Mrs. FARREN determined on endeavouring to establish herself under the banners of some respectable and permanent Company; and for this purpose she made application to Mr. WHITELY, then Manager of a Company at Chester. But here Fortune frowned on her wishes: for this Gentleman's Corps at that time had no vacancy. Considerations, however, of humanity, on beholding a Mother with her two Daughters struggling with the distress which was ready to crush them, induced him to give them strong letters of recommendation to Mr. JOSEPH YOUNGER, then Patentee of the Liverpool Theatre; and from this recommendation Lady DERBY may justly date the good fortune which has since attended her through life.

Mr. YOUNGER was a man who seemed born to administer to the wants and distresses of his fellow-creatures;—whose heart ever felt for,

and

and whose hand was ever open to relieve, their miseries;—poverty he never passed by unheeded; and wretchedness always left his charitable door with a smile. The Author of these Memoirs has more than once been witness to the tear of gratitude which has succeeded the anguish he has removed; and is proud to pay this just tribute to departed worth. Such being the character of Mr. YOUNGER, it is not to be wondered at, that he embraced the cause of our Heroine, her Sister, and her Mother, and engaged the whole family.

Miss KITTY FARREN's (now Mrs. KNIGHT) chief merit lay in the performance of pert Chambermaids and giddy Girls, and in these characters she immediately became useful in the Liverpool Theatre. Miss BETSEY (her Ladyship) aspired somewhat higher, and as she was thought to possess an excellent voice, at the age of fifteen she made her *debut* on the boards of a regular Theatre, in the character of *Rosetta*, in the Opera of *Love in a Village*; but such was the extreme poverty of the family that, it is very well remembered, the Ladies belonging to the Theatre were under the necessity of subscribing each a portion of their apparel, before she could be properly equipped: So much may great talents and merit be depressed before opportunity is afforded for their display. In the part of *Rosetta* her Ladyship obtained great applause; and, shortly after, she performed *Lady Townley*, in a manner that stamped her fame with the good people of Liverpool, and gave such satisfaction to Mr. YOUNGER, that he procured credit with his tradesmen for what clothes the family might stand in need of, and thus enabled our Heroine to make an appearance in some degree suitable to her merits as an Actress.

The friendship of Mr. YOUNGER did not stop here: for he not only encouraged the rising talents of her Ladyship, by advancing her salary, but

but made use of every endeavour to promote her interests*. During the whole of the season she continued to increase her fame and improve herself as an Actress.

Her generous Patron, anxious that her merit should not be lost in obscurity, on his return to the Metropolis obtained her an Engagement with the elder COLMAN, then Patentee of the Theatre Royal in the Hay-market; and in the summer of the year 1777, she made her first appearance there in the character of *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, the same part she had chosen for her *debut* at Liverpool. This was succeeded by her performance of *Lady Townly*, in which she obtained great applause; and taught the public to consider her as a very promising young Actress.

At this period Miss FARREN and her Mother lodged in Suffolk-street, near the Hay-market; and though their circumstances were much improved, yet still they were far from affluent. A quondam acquaintance belonging to the Liverpool Company having called on them, was invited to partake of a family dinner, which consisted of a *Shoulder of Mutton* and *Potatoes*, served in the *brown dish* in which they were baked, and a plain *Pot of Porter*. This fare, though simple, was luxurious compared with what they had been used to in their theatrical rambles in the North, where the airy levity of Comedy had too often served for a breakfast, and the sober dignity of Tragedy supplied the place of the more solid delights of a good dinner.

The reputation which our fair Heroine had so justly procured herself at the Little Theatre, obtained her an Engagement from the Manager of Co-

* About this time, her Ladyship became an articled Pupil to Mr. YOUNGER.

vent-Garden, where she performed Tragedy with the late Mr. DIGGES, with much applause. The friendship of Mr. YOUNGER still kept pace with her deserts, and in a very short time he gave her an Engagement at Drury-Lane, of which Theatre he was at that time Stage-Manager. Here she was considered as the leading votary of *Melpomene*, and appeared in the characters of *Juliet*, and the *Fair Circassian*, in a new Play which in that season had a great run. But through the *coalition* of the two Theatres, which took place in that winter, she played alternately at both Houses.

It was during this period that Miss FARREN first began to be noticed by the young Men of Fashion; among the foremost of whom was the Right Hon. C—— J—— F—, who for many months paid her the most pointed attention, and frequently avowed the sincerest affection. Mr. F—, at that time, was considered a handsome and accomplished man; no wonder then that he aspired to the possession of a Lady, who was so generally admired; or that the *Demosthenes* of his Country, the zealous and eloquent Guardian of its most sacred Rights, should be sighing out his soul at the feet of a giddy, green-sick Girl.

The passion of Mr. Fox for her Ladyship continued very violent during the whole of the winter; and it is possible, that, as her virtue refused offers of *Carte Blanche*, he might have been induced to offer her honourable terms, had not a circumstance occurred, in the following summer, which completely cooled the ardour of his desires. This circumstance will be told in its proper place.

Though Miss FARREN took the lead at her first appearance in the Winter Theatres in *Tragedy*, yet she was considered as second only to the British *Thalia*, Mrs. ABINGTON, in *Comedy*; and the removal of that

that Lady from Drury-Lane to Covent Garden afforded full opportunity for the display of her talents in their proper sphere. To this event she was certainly indebted for the rank she shortly after obtained in the public estimation, as the mimic representative of the Woman of Fashion.

Mrs. ABINGTON, previous to the opening of the Hay-market Theatre in the succeeding summer, entered into terms with Mr. COLMAN, to perform the part of *Lady Newberry*, in his new Comedy of *Separate Maintenance*, which was then in preparation; but Mr. SHERIDAN and the Proprietors of Dury-Lane, thinking her loss irreparable, and wishing to prevent their leading Actress making her appearance at a Summer Theatre, compromised with her on her own terms. In consequence of which she signified her inability to comply with her Engagement; and Mr. COLMAN was under the necessity of looking out for some one to supply her place. In this conjuncture Miss FARREN alone offered, and the little Manager (though he insisted that, from her having been so recently in so mean a situation, she must be too *aukward* and *illiterate* to personate the finished and elegant Woman of Rank he had drawn) put her into the part*.

Mr. COLMAN, though in general a most excellent judge, had not, in this instance, formed a very accurate estimate of Miss FARREN's abilities: for her acting in *Lady Newberry* not only gave the greatest satisfaction to himself, but so confirmed her fame with the Public, that

* There is an allusion to the disappointment Mr. COLMAN felt in Mrs. ABINGTON's failing in her engagement to perform the part of *Lady Newberry*, and his being under the necessity of putting so young an Actress in her stead, in the Prologue to *Separate Maintenance*:

"A *Younger* Princess hoists the Empress' flag."

she

she was considered, from that time, as equal to her predecessor (Mrs. ABINGTON), in the personification of the Fine Lady.

About this time the Public Prints talked of a *penchant* between her Ladyship and JOHN PALMER, the Comedian; but though the subject was then the topic of general conversation, and it is pretty certain that the Parties had some attachment for each other, yet it is equally certain that nothing passed between them but what was strictly honourable. Be that, however, as it may, not only wit, but malevolence, were freely exercised at their expence; and a Bon Mot of the elder COLMAN deserves to be recorded.—While the Comedy of *Separate Maintenance* was getting up, PALMER was one morning not to be found at Rehearsal, and both Author and Performers were delayed at the Theatre by his non-attendance. At length Miss FARREN ran into the Green-Room, and said "he was arrived, and coming along the Stage-passage—she knew him by his tread." "Are you so well acquainted with Mr. PALMER's *tread*, Madam?" said COLMAN. Which question, for the moment, quite put our Heroine to the blush*.

* Another Bon Mot of COLMAN, which originated in this same Play, is well worth preserving. In one of the Scenes, *Lady Newberry* says she has a *Receipt* to make a fine Gentleman. "A fine Gentleman by Receipt!" exclaims another of the Characters—"how is that?" "I will tell you in three words,"—is the reply—"The GRACES! The GRACES! The GRACES!" The late Earl of CHESTERFIELD, who had not long before published his "Letters on Politeness" to his Son, being present in the Stage-Box, every eye in the Theatre was immediately turned upon him—so much so, that he left his seat. When the Play was over, he went to the Green-room, and told Miss FARREN that when she replied, "The Graces! The Graces! The Graces!" she looked towards him, which turned the attention of the whole House upon him. "Impossible, my Lord," said COLMAN, "the Graces are not allied to your Lordship's Family."—PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE was then just returned from abroad, notwithstandiug all his Father's instructions, a very aukward ill-bred fellow.

In

In the course of this second season of her Ladyship's appearance in the Hay-market, she performed (for the first time of her performing a Breeches Part) the character of *Charlotte*, in COLMAN's Comedy of the *Suicide*. But her appearance in this was so different from what it had been in other characters, and she looked to so much disadvantage in breeches, that the passions of the MAN of the PEOPLE were completely cooled by seeing her, and after exclaiming, " D—n it, she " has no prominence either before or behind—all is a straight line from " head to foot; and for her legs, they are shaped like a sugar loaf *"— he gave up the pursuit for ever. The authenticity of this fact may be relied on; and had not Mr. F— been disgusted by seeing her Ladyship in breeches, he might have continued her admirer to this day.

Mr. FOX was succeeded in his attentions to our fair Lady by the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY, who, from some attentions he had endeavoured to pay her, it is supposed, rejoiced very much at that Gentleman's resignation. His Lordship immediately avowed the most sincere and ardent attachment, and took every means of promoting her interests. He not only used his utmost influence to forward her in the favour of Mr. SHERIDAN, then one of the Proprietors of Drury-Lane Theatre, but procured her many Patrons among Ladies of the first Fashion in the Country. Amongst these, Lady DOROTHY THOMPSON and Lady CECILIA JOHNSTON noticed her Ladyship in a particular manner.

* Lord M—T—WN, whose *propensities* were then much talked of, on seeing her Ladyship perform in the *Suicide*, declared, " she looked like a fine *awkward growing Boy*, and would make a charming companion—in *breeches*."

Such high Patronage immediately raised her consequence within the walls of the Theatre; and Mr. KING, who about that time was appointed Manager, was proud to advise and advance a Lady so much noticed by the Fashionable World.

An elegant copy of Verses was handed about Town at the period of Lord DERBY's avowal of his attachment, dissuading her from a connexion with his Lordship, as too early in life to *play* "DARBY and JOAN." Notwithstanding this, she continued to encourage his attentions; which so emboldened the *lusty* Earl, that he made an offer of *Carte Blanche*, with all the gay train of etceteras. This offer was rejected with great *hauteur*; and his Lordship was compelled to atone for the insult offered to her Ladyship's Virtue, and make his peace, by the most humble submissions.

The prudent conduct of our Heroine made the deepest impressions on Lord DERBY, and added to the ardour of his love. His attentions daily increased, and he was never happy but when dangling at her heels. Frequently has he been seen following her, after morning rehearsals, from *Old Drury* to Grosvenor-square, puffing from want of breath, and sighing his "soft tale," while her Ladyship, from mere wantonness, has kept him on the jog-trot, and hardly deigned to give him a smile. Still his attentions continued unabated; and her Ladyship began now to behold in fancy, the golden circle of Nobility which she hoped might some time encompass her brow.

Elevated to the first Circles, she now became anxious to rival those of the highest rank and fortune in every female and polite accomplishment; and she applied with such indefatigable pains to improvement,

as

as within a few years to be justly considered a finished pattern of Female Fashion and Elegance.

A few years subsequent to Lord DERBY's avowal of his passion, His Grace the Duke of RICHMOND, desirous of having Private Plays performed at his house in Privy-Gardens, in which the *obese* EARL, Lord HENRY FITZGERALD, and the Hon. Mrs. DAMER, were to perform the principal Characters, her Ladyship was appointed to preside over the Stage Business, an employment for which she expressed great fondness, as it afforded her an opportunity of being introduced to many of the first Nobility in the Kingdom, and thereby gave her an importance unknown to any Theatrical Cotemporary. This opportunity she failed not to improve all in her power, and by this means had her vanity gratified to the full extent of her wishes*.

* About this period the following Lines were addressed, by Lord DERBY, to Mr. HUMPHREY, the Painter, on his Portrait of Miss FARREN:

O thou, whose Pencil all the Graces guide,
Whom Beauty, conscious of her fading Bloom,
So oft implores, alas! with harmless pride,
To snatch the transient treasure from the Tomb;

Pleas'd, I behold the Fair, whose comic Art
Th' unwearied eye of taste and judgment draws;
Who charms with Nature's elegance the Heart,
And claims the loudest thunder of applause.

Such, such alone, should prompt thy Pencil's toil:
Of saving Folly give thy labour o'er;
Fools never will be wanting to our Isle,
Perhaps a FARREN may appear no more.

From

From this period she began to be noticed, and even caressed, by a very long list of Fashionables; a circumstance which seemed at all times to have been her greatest ambition. She took a house in Green-street, Grosvenor-square, and endeavouring to forget the mean condition of trudging from town to town with the *Drum*, set up her Carriage, and changed the homely fare of a *Shoulder of Mutton* in a *brown dish*, for the *luxuries* of an *elegant table*.

In this state of Prosperity, and even Splendor, now passed her Ladyship's life; but Prosperity too often banishes Gratitude and Feeling. Of the truth of this observation, her conduct towards the generous Guardian of her youth, Mr. YOUNGER, affords a strong instance. A few years after her first appearance in London, ill-health compelled that Gentleman to resign his situation as Stage-Manager of *Drury-Lane*; and he removed to Liverpool, where, for the most part, he resided. The wish, however, of conversing with his old Friends, induced him, after rather a long absence, to visit the Metropolis; and shortly after his arrival, anxious to behold the happiness which his benevolence had been the chief means of creating, he knocked at Miss FARREN's door, and sent in his name, when—the Writer of these Memoirs blushes for the fact while he relates it—the *embryo* Countess sent out an answer by the servant, "that she knew no person of that name." Well might the feeling heart of YOUNGER be deeply wounded by such usage, and well might he exclaim in the language of our immortal Bard,

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Tho' thou the waters warp
Thy sting is not so sharp,
As friend remember'd not.

Mr.

Mr. YOUNGER related his reception at the house of his quondam Pupil, to some Gentlemen of the Theatre, who, to prove her Ladyship farther, mentioned in the Green-Room, that, " her friend YOUNGER " was in Town!"—" YOUNGER! YOUNGER!" said she, " *I do not* " *know him*; but, I believe, I may have heard his name:—Was he not once " Patentee of the Liverpool Theatre?"—thus adding *Falsehood* to *Ingratitude* towards the man who had shielded her when unprotected, and rescued her from Poverty and Misery, if not from Ruin!

It has been said, that though Miss FARREN refused to see her Benefactor, she nevertheless relieved his wants in secret, by several handsome presents; but this could not be the case: for the benevolent YOUNGER was never in want of Charity from any one; and the hand that had so often administered to the Miseries of his Fellow-Creatures, never was reduced to the necessity of asking Relief for its own.

Shortly after this circumstance, her Ladyship was one evening in the Theatre, boasting of the goodness of her Memory; when the late *inimitable* PARSONS, after hearing her with much attention, observed, that " he " could not think that a *good Memory*, which *forgot* the *Benefits* it had " received."

The *lusty* EARL, at length, finding the fair Citadel was not to be carried in any other way, determined on honourable Proposals; and promised, on the event of the late Countess's death, to share with Miss FARREN his Heart and Fortune. From this period, therefore, she considered herself as the *expectant* Lady DERBY; and his Lordship shewed all the attention of an expectant Husband. For many years, a servant went regularly, at ten o'clock in the morning, from Grosvenor-

square to Green-street, to inquire after her health; and his Lordship's first question on getting up, was, "How has Miss FARREN slept?" and if the answer was favourable, he expressed his greatest satisfaction. This was certainly a very strong proof of the constancy and sincerity of his attachment.

Still our Heroine doubted the stability of her Fortune, and feared that the Countess *in Possession* might outlive the Countess *in Expectancy*. The Children of Hope are always the Children of Fear, and the Children of Fear are ever anxious to pry into Futurity. No wonder then that her Ladyship should put faith in Auguries, and try to know the fate that hung over her.

In Shoreditch Workhouse there was for a long series of years a Pauper who professed to have studied the Stars, and to tell the Decrees of Fate. This Lunatic or Enthusiast has, we believe, been visited by thousands*, who wished to know the good or ill that awaited them. Often has the Lover hastened to learn whether his Mistress would ever bless his arms; the Gambler to know on what card to stake his Fortune; the Speculator to be told whether his Schemes of Wealth would be successful; and the giddy Girl, who had longed for Grandeur, to inquire whether her golden Dreams would be realized. To this Prophet went her Ladyship; and, we have heard, he gratified her ambition, by telling her †,

* A certain Illustrious Personage once paid this Oracle a visit, and was told some things which made him wonder, and, almost tremble.

† A Caricature Print was published at this time, intitled, "*Beatrice* fishing for a *Coronet*," and representing her Ladyship in the act of consulting this Dispenser of Fate.

that the Coronet which Fate had suspended over her, would some time fall on her head.

We hasten now to conduct her Ladyship to the most splendid and important event of her Life, an event which must be recent in the memory of every one. The death of the late Countess afforded the EARL an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of his promises, by the fulfilling of them. Still the Public doubted whether she would have her ambition gratified. Some were of opinion, that the ardour of the Lover's affection had been cooled by length of time, and that he would never *degrade* the Peerage by an union with an Actress; while others insisted, that time, far from lessening, had increased, his affection, and that her having prudently kept him at such a respectful distance, would induce him to raise her to the participation of his title as soon as decency would permit.

Those who held the latter opinion, were in the right: for a very short time elapsed before her Ladyship's intention of quitting the Stage was publicly announced, to the no small emolument of the Proprietors, on the remaining nights of the Performance. The Public flocked in crowds to see their old favourite, before she retired for ever, and for a week or two the Treasury of Drury-Lane was able to pay all the Performers.

We pause here, to relate a fact which we look on with regret and indignation, and which we could hardly give credit to, did we not know it to be true from actual observation.——Lord S———, Son of the Earl of DERBY, had for some years previous to the time we have just mentioned, been in the habits of *chaperoning* Miss FARREN to and from

from the Theatre, when the calls of public or private business required his Father's presence elsewhere. This, the vanity of a young Man, who professed to be the Man of Fashion, might, in part, excuse; but the event of the death of a Parent might have been some check on his gallantry. Lord S————, nevertheless, continued his attentions even during the short interval that elapsed between her Death and Funeral: thus flattering the ambition of the *expectant* Countess at the expence of the respect he owed to the Memory of the source of his Being. Surely this *puny Lordling* was not weak enough to think, that the Legitimacy of his Title to the Honours of his illustrious Ancestors, would be strengthened by trampling on the Ashes of a Mother!

The night soon arrived in which her Ladyship was to bid farewell to that Audience, whose approbation had so often cheered her in her Theatrical Career; and after the loudest and most reiterated plaudits ever perhaps heard within the Walls of a Theatre, the Curtain dropt on the Glass of Fashion, the favourite of THALIA, for ever.

Her Ladyship having taken her leave of the Audience proceeded to the Green-Room to bid farewell to the Performers; and here a scene ensued that would have drawn *tears down the cheek of frozen* APATHY!—Men, Women, and Children, were all bewailing the loss they should sustain by her secession!—DIGNUM, the Singer, in particular, was so much affected that, after sobbing violently for a quarter of an hour, he declared he never had felt so much grief, unless once during his apprenticeship, when staring out of his shop-window after TOM KING, who was then passing by, and forgetting the *goose* was too hot, he burnt a coat-sleeve off.—In the general grief of the Green-Room, her Ladyship alone was unmoved; and her sense of her own importance prevented her

dropping

dropping one tear, on quitting those Friends by whom she had been caressed for near twenty years.

Her last act behind the Curtain of the Theatre was so generous and noble, as to deserve to be recorded: Every Female Performer of any consequence is, at all times when dressed for her Part, attended by a Page, to carry her train, &c. This Page is a little Boy, generally from five to nine years of age, who is paid by the Proprietors for that purpose; and each Lady has her separate Page. On her Ladyship's quitting the Green-Room, this little fellow was waiting at the door (doubtless with the expectation of a small present from a mistress whom he had served for four or five years with the greatest attention), when turning to FOSBROOK, the Box and Housekeeper, who stood near her, she generously ordered him *to give her Page* HALF-A-CROWN!! How much more credit would it have reflected on that Nobility she was upon the eve of enjoying, had she took the child by the hand, acknowledged her sense of his fidelity, cordially bad him adieu, and made him happy by a more generous present. This conduct would indeed have added real dignity to high rank. We are proud to mention one Lady whose feeling heart would not have suffered her, in a similar situation, to have acted otherwise. Need we say, that we mean the amiable JORDAN?

From the moment of her Ladyship's leaving the Stage, preparations began to be made for the Marriage, which was intended to take place within a few days; but the EARL's passions were inflamed to such a degree with the expectations of his coming bliss, that it produced a fit of the Gout, and his happiness was unavoidably delayed till his re-

 covery.

covery. The ceremony which united this faithful pair, after a courtship of eighteen years, was at last performed at his Lordship's house in Grosvenor-square; and at nine o'clock the same evening, they set out for the Oaks, (the EARL's Seat in Surrey), to try the pleasures of Matrimony. A Diurnal Writer next morning wittily observed, that it was so dark when they left Town, they could not *see*, and therefore *felt* their way. A few days after the Marriage, her Ladyship was introduced at Court.

Here her triumph was complete: for amidst a bevy of high illustrious Dames, she was particularly singled out for the notice of Royalty, and HER MAJESTY conversed with her for some time in the Circle. But here her Ladyship's conversation, like *Lenitive's* in the *Prize*, "smelt of the Shop," in spite of all her efforts to prevent it. In the course of the conversation in the Drawing-Room, she said, "she felt that the most blissful moment of her life, in which she had the distinguished honour of *appearing before* HER MAJESTY in her *new Character*." It has been said that the QUEEN eyed our fair Dame very gravely at this expression; as much as to ask—"Cannot your Ladyship forget your breeding?"

For some days previous to this day of triumph, it had been much doubted in the Fashionable World, whether the Countess could be received at Court. This doubt was, however, removed by her speedy *appearance* there. Yet we cannot forbear giving it as our decided opinion, that the etiquette of the Cout forbad her Ladyship's introduction. The obscurity of plebeian origin may be completely removed by an union

union with Nobility; but we can never agree to the propriety of one of *Their Majesties' Servants* * becoming a Companion for themselves.

It may, perhaps, be said, that all the Attendants about THEIR MAJESTIES' Persons, are their Servants; but they are Servants of a different kind from the Players of Old Drury: for they are the Servants of THEIR MAJESTIES *only*, while the latter are, at the same time, the avowed Servants of the Public.

We have thus conducted the Countess of DERBY from Poverty to Grandeur—from a Barn to a Court. We have fulfilled our duty, in relating the History of her Life *honestly*. We have not extenuated any one fact;—we have not intentionally misrepresented one;—nor have we "set down aught in malice." Those who envy her Ladyship's elevation, may think we have spoken too favourably; while those who regard her with more partiality, may think we have related circumstances which in some degree lessen the consequence of a Peeress. Both these opinions we regard with Indifference. Truth alone has been our guide; and we feel those sensations on committing the Book to the Public, which the consciousness of having told Truth inspires.

* It is to be observed, that only the Performers of the Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane, are THEIR MAJESTIES' Servants; and that all Players are, by several Statutes, declared *Vagabonds* and *excommunicate*, of course not entitled to Christian Burial. CHARLES the SECOND bettered their condition, and from the beginning of his Reign, that portion of them which was denominated his Servants, wore a Livery, which was given them annually from the Office of the Lord Chamberlain; and on great occasions they waited at the Royal Table, and partook of the regal crumbs. The œconomy which took place under the Administration of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, deprived the Players of their annual suit, not, however, without much grumbling on their part.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS'-HALL.]

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